Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

Letter to Teachers from the Mother of a Sandy Hook Victim

The mother of one of the victims of last year's Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy has written a letter to America's teachers. Nebla Marquez-Green had two children at Sandy Hook Elementary. Her daughter, 6-year-old Ana Grace, was killed in the attack; her son was uninjured. Her letter, originally posted on the Education Week *website, is touching and encouraging. I hope it blesses you as it did me.   – MK Overstreet*

As another school year begins and old routines settle back into place, I wanted to share my story in honor of the teachers everywhere who care for our children.

I lost my 6-year-old daughter Ana Grace on Dec. 14, 2012, in the rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School. My son, who was in the building and heard the shooting, survived.

While waiting in the firehouse that day to hear the official news that our daughter was dead, my husband and I made promises to ourselves, to each other and to our son. We promised to face the future with courage, faith and love.

As teachers and school employees begin this new year, my wish for you is that same courage, faith and love.

It takes guts to be a teacher. Six brave women gave their lives trying to protect their students at Sandy Hook. Other teachers were forced to run from the building, stepping over the bodies of their friends and colleagues, and they came right back to work.

When I asked my son's teacher why she returned, she responded, "Because they are my kids. And my students need me now more than ever." She sent daily updates on my son's progress, from his behavior to what he'd eaten for lunch. And four months later, when my son finally smiled one day after school, I asked him about it. His response? "Mom. My teacher is so funny. I had an epic day."

While I pray you will never find yourself in the position of the teachers at Sandy Hook, your courage will support students like my son, who have lived through traumas no child should have to. Your courage will support students who are left out and overlooked, like the isolated young man who killed my daughter. At some point he was a young, impressionable student, often sitting all alone at school. You will have kids facing long odds for whom your smile, your encouraging word and your willingness to go the extra mile will provide the comfort and security they need to try again tomorrow.

When you Google "hero," there should be a picture of a principal, a school lunch worker, a custodian, a reading specialist, a teacher or a bus monitor. Real heroes don't wear capes. They work in America's schools. Have faith that your hard work is having a profound impact on your students. Of the 15,000 personal letters I received after the shooting, only one stays at my bedside. It's from my high school English teacher, Robert Buckley.

But you can't be courageous or step out on faith without a deep love for what you do. Parents are sending their precious children to you this fall. Some will come fully prepared, and others not. They will come fed and with empty bellies. They will come from intact homes and fractured ones. Love
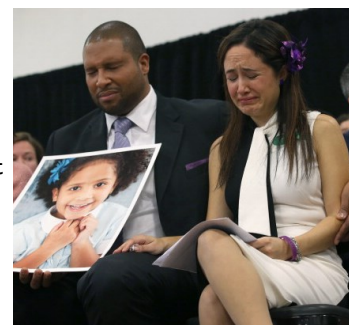
them all.

When my son returned to school in January, I thought I was going to lose my mind. Imagine the difficulty in sending your surviving child into a classroom when you lost your baby in a school shooting. We sent him because we didn't want him to be afraid.

According to the 2011-12 National Survey of Children's Health, nearly half of America's children will have suffered at least one childhood trauma before the age of 18. They need your love.

A few weeks before the shooting, Ana Grace and I shared a special morning. Lunches were packed and clothes were picked out the night before, so we had extra time to snuggle. And while I lay in bed with my beautiful caramel princess, she sensed that I was distracted and asked, "What's the matter, Mom?" I remember saying to her, "Nothing, baby. It's just work." She looked at me for a very long time with a thoughtful stare, then she told me, "Don't let them suck your fun circuits dry, Mom."

As you begin this school year, remember Ana Grace. Walk with courage, with faith, and with love. And don't let them suck your fun circuits dry.

Spotlight: Two Great Library Media Programs

Westridge Elementary School
According to library media specialist and National Board Certified Teacher Jessica Holmes, the goal at Westridge Elementary (Franklin County) is to build its reading community this year. Each month, she is focusing on a different project to promote reading communities.

In August, her project was geared toward teachers and staff. Each teacher and staff member in the building received an invitation to participate in the school's first Booknic (a book-based picnic). Each participant was asked to bring in a dish inspired by a favorite children's book. Staff members were very creative in their participation. Principal Kimberly Young brought brownies to accompany *Chocolate Fever* by Robert Kimmel Smith. Counselor Stephanie Emberton made barbeque chicken for the book *Interrupting Chicken* by David Ezra Stein. In all, there were 27 different dishes/book connections.

Holmes placed all dishes in the library with the library book featured next to its corresponding dish. The entire staff was then invited to eat in the library during lunch. As an added bonus, a representative from the Paul Sawyier Public Library attended and spoke with teachers about ways the public library could help them in the classroom. Though it's too soon to tell the full impact of the event, Holmes believes it was a huge success.

"It seemed to motivate teachers to do more creative reading programs with their children and it builds excitement," says Holmes.

She doesn't underestimate the importance of fun in the reading community and sees current efforts as a way of engendering

positive attitudes toward literacy. Like most busy adults, teachers can easily lose sight of the small pleasures in life, such as getting lost in a good book. Holmes hopes this event was a nice reminder for the staff.

"Sometimes teachers forget to just enjoy reading," she remarked.

Click here to see more pictures from the booknic.

Wayne County Middle School
The Wayne County Middle School Media Center has a new look. Even though the media center was one of the few libraries on campus that did not have to be packed up and moved to a new building as the campus was reconfigured to meet a growing population, there were still considerable changes made to the arrangement of the books to better benefit students.

The Scholastic Book Fair is underway in the center of the middle school library and drawing lots of attention. But that is not the only thing students are flocking to see in the media center. The students are enjoying a new "book store feel" that makes it easy for them to find the types of books they prefer.

The enthusiasm generated by the new approach is contagious among the students visiting the modern media center.

"The students love the new arrangement. They are able to find what they are interested in very quickly, without being directed all over the library to different authors," explained Wayne County Middle School Media Specialist Sharon Hill.

Hill took on the huge responsibility of rearranging the library's fiction books by genre to make it more user-friendly. The switch took an immense amount of work because every fiction book had to be taken off the shelf, sorted by genre, changed in the school's online catalog to reflect the genre, stickered with a genre sticker and reshelved in a new location. There are 17 fiction genres including Sci-Fi/Fantasy, Historical, Realistic, Mystery, Sports and Adventure.

Some of Hill's ideas came from visiting three schools in Fayette County: Crawford Middle School, Tates Creek High School and The

The reorganized library at Wayne County Middle School makes it easy for students to find the types of books they prefer.

Learning Center at Linlee (an alternative high school).

"It took weeks of work, and I was fortunate to have amazing helpers," she said.

According to Hill, a library needs to serve its patrons. She says today's middle school patron usually has an idea of what type of books he or she likes and is usually in a hurry to get a new book and get on their way.

"It was well worth all the work it took when I see students and staff alike thrilled at the new arrangement," she said.

Hill takes satisfaction in seeing students' faces light up when they realize that the books they like are all together in one place. Click here to learn more about the Wayne County Middle School library.

Key Skills for Career and Technical Education

Teresa Rogers is a KDE literacy consultant. Rogers has taught nursing, health sciences, elementary reading and writing, and high school English. In the February 2013 issue, Rogers began a series on literacy in career and technical education (CTE). She continues here with part seven of that series. For more information, visit her Literacy in Career and Technical Education website.

What skills are essential for your students to be successful? Like any first-class CTE teacher, you're beginning to make a list in your head already. First, you list the safety guidelines, then, employability skills, and finally, those typically required of professionals in your field. As vital as these skills are, have you considered what literacy skills your students need?

Jeffrey Kluger, senior writer at *TIME* magazine, revealed what the future may look like for our students if we fail in this task. "If you don't adequately acquire those skills, moving out into the real world of real people can actually become quite scary." Without you there to guide them, do your students have the skills – to locate, comprehend and use information – necessary for college or the workplace?

Reading comprehension is a complex, but active, process that requires intentional interaction between reader and text. Just as you can identify specific skills for which students need to be proficient in your program, there are identifiable skills that are critical for reading comprehension. Let's look at a few of these key skills.

Preview the Text

Good readers preview, or look at parts or features, of the text. Doing so helps the reader to activate prior knowledge about the subject. In technical texts, readers often preview the material to locate specific information to answer a question, solve a problem or complete a task.

When introducing a new text, do a "walk-through" with your students. Point out key features of the text such as, titles, headings, illustrations, diagrams, feature boxes, etc. Use these to talk about what they may learn from reading the text.

Make Predictions

Good readers make predictions before and during reading. When students make a prediction, they make a guess based on clues the author provides. A student may predict, "I think this may happen if I don't do… ." As they read, they will either confirm or revise their predictions. In your classroom, model this aloud to allow students to "see" your thinking as your read.

Ask Questions

Good readers ask questions before, during and after reading. Questions help the reader monitor their comprehension. These may include questions such as, "Does this make sense to me?" or "What do I do before I…?" Explain to students that asking questions helps the reader monitor their understanding. Model for students how to generate questions. Allow students to work with a partner to create questions that a reader might have about the text you are reading.

Clarify

When good readers read a word or confusing part of the text that doesn't makes sense, they stop and clarify. Explain to students what clarifying looks like. For example, "I came to a word I didn't know. I thought to myself, 'There are a couple of things I could do. First, I could see if I recognize any part of the word that might give me a clue. If not, I will read on and hopefully, that will me other clues. If not, I could ask a friend to help me understand this word.'"

Summarizing

After reading a text, good readers are able to recall important points and details from what they have read. Knowledge of text structure will help students develop good summaries. Model for students how to identify key ideas and how to put those key ideas together to create a summary. "When I summarize, I tell in my own words the important things I have read."

Developing these skills may seem to be a daunting task, but it doesn't have to be. Begin by embedding these one by one into the content texts that you already use. The impact will reach far beyond your classroom. You can find these and more at www.cteliteracy.com.

Technology Critique: Storybird – Artful Storytelling

Benjamin Stephens teaches computer lab at Auburndale Elementary in Jefferson County.

Storybird is hard not to love. Storybirds are short, art-inspired stories you can make and share on any device. This a great site for reluctant writers, especially for the "I don't know what to write about" students. This also is a great place for students to read other users' writings.

Storybird is full of books for students to explore. It also provides a plethora of art choices to help inspire writing. The only drawback is a lack of audio or movies. The addition of music and movies could increase student engagement. It would be neat for students to pick songs to accompany their books.

I would challenge you to find a student who does not see this site and feel an absolute need to make a book. Even my most-reluctant writers worked on their books with great persistence.

There are lots of examples for students to see what these books can look like. I would like to see some actual writing prompts or even sentence starters for the students. For example, a section of "Finish this Storybird" would be great for some students.

You may need to walk your class through the initial setup, especially if you want students to have their own accounts. However, once the students are in the creation section of this site it is as simple as click and drag. The pictures can be oriented several ways on the page, and the students can quickly add new pages as needed.

If you are willing to pay, each student can have a published book.

Technology Tips from the International Reading Association

Integrating Tablet Tech with a Teacher's Touch

There are many new educational apps, some available for free and some for a minimal fee, geared toward primary students. When used to support instructional goals, these apps provide a variety of possibilities for learning and assessment. But turning children loose without the benefit of scaffolded learning and a gradual release of responsibility is a dangerous practice, particularly when it comes to young learners who may be easily distracted by the bells and whistles.

Teachers should begin the lesson without the use of the app, focusing first on the literacy goal. Then, since most iPads have the ability to be synced to SMART boards or projectors, you can demonstrate the app's functions and capabilities to the entire class. Allow children to take turns using the app while it's projected onto the screen. As they become more comfortable with the software, they can move onto more independent exploration.

After sharing experiences like field trips, students can tell the story of their adventure through a presentation app like Haiku Deck (free; available for Apple devices), which is simple enough to use in an elementary classroom but robust enough for a professional setting.

Working together and exercising their cooperation skills, students can create a slideshow using Creative Commons-licensed images or ones they've taken with the iPad's camera. Writing and editing can be done in small groups or, depending on the age of the learners, with a teacher.

Using this framework ensures that tablet technology becomes a powerful tool in a teacher's arsenal and not a replacement for high-quality literacy instruction.

– Kathy Prater

Online Reading + Twitter = #EdTech Success

Social media can be a powerful tool to help our students invent their futures. Colleges and employers will be searching the Internet for our students someday soon, and what will they find? Use Twitter effectively to give your students the opportunity to flaunt their learning online and ensure they make a positive impression.

#Question. Students read an article or passage provided by you and tweet a question that demonstrates comprehension of the article and deeper levels of thinking.

#Synthesize. Encourage students to use hashtags meaningfully. Perhaps they've been assigned to read Langston Hughes and that reminds them of a line in a Countee Cullen poem you discussed last week. Their tweet can quote the lines and the hashtags can link the two together: "What happens to a dream deferred?" Dreams can be saved for the right time. #Hughes #Cullen

#Evaluate. You tweet a link to an article or video with a prompt and students respond to you and each other with their assessment. It's a seemingly simple task that requires students to read critically online, incorporate ideas from others, and distill their thoughts into the most powerful points. Metacognition at its finest and all in 140 characters.

Before leaving for a field trip, we all remind students that their behavior reflects upon themselves and their school. Let's consider social media the world's biggest field trip and teach them proper behavior. Let's help our students create digital footprints worth following.

– Mary Cotillo (@mzcotillo on Twitter)

Kentucky Department of Education Updates

Submit Your Best Practices

Kentucky Best Practices is a dynamic database of information, literature and materials that has been compiled from schools and districts and will be continuously updated. It is intended to support teachers, administrators, district personnel and any other education advocates seeking strategies that have been proven successful in a variety of settings.

In addition, this site recognizes and celebrates Kentucky schools that embody strategies that result in students who are college- and career-ready. By sharing their methods, we hope to demonstrate that best practices can be achieved in every school.

Each month the Best Practices team will spotlight some of the most promising best practices. All best practice submissions that have been submitted and reviewed may be found in the searchable database.

To learn more about submitting a best practice, how your submission will be evaluated or to see spotlighted programs and search the database, click here.

Common Core Fact Sheets

- Top 10 Reasons to Support the Common Core
- Why Administrators Support the Common Core
- Why Teachers Support the Common Core
- What a Parent Can Expect from the Common Core

Graduation, CCR Rates Up

In September, Gov. Steve Beshear and Commissioner Terry Holiday announced dramatic improvement in the state's graduation and college- and-career readiness (CCR) rates. The data are the latest proof of measurable, transformational improvement over the past four years in the state's education system.

For 2013, preliminary figures show Kentucky posted an 86 percent graduation rate. This year Kentucky is using a more accurate way to measure the number of students who graduate – the same way nearly every other state measures graduation rate. Comparing with the most recent data available from other states (2011), even accounting for their improvement, Kentucky's rate is among the highest.

The CCR rate, a measure of whether students are prepared to be successful after high school graduation, is up 20 percent from 2010.

While only about a third of high school graduates were considered ready three years ago, initial data now show more than half – 54 percent – are ready to take the next step into credit-bearing college courses or a postsecondary training program.

Data from the state's Unbridled Learning Assessment and Accountability System were released to the public Sept. 27.

Engaging Families: Resources from NCFL

Bonnie Lash Freeman is an education specialist for the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). In this capacity, she manages various projects and grants focused in the areas of family literacy program development, family engagement and elementary and early childhood language and literacy development. In addition, she was the primary staff member to facilitate the development of NCFL's Certified Trainers – a network of family literacy professionals across the nation. Her expertise in program development includes NCFL's Toyota Family Learning Project, the Family Literacy Corps (a national AmeriCorps project), the South Carolina Head Start Family Independence Project, the Head Start Family Literacy Project, the ParentChild Interaction Project, the Prichard Committee Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership, the Kentucky Reading Project and the Chase Building Readers Project. From 2004-08, she served on the Kentucky Board of Education.

A new school year has started! You have met your students and their families. You are getting to know your students – their abilities and some of the gaps they are facing. Now comes the ongoing planning.

As you shape the year for each student, remember to include their family's perspective. Ask parents and guardians to share their academic goals for their student. Consider carefully how you will communicate with each family about their student's success and challenges.

To help you systematically plan for 2013-14 family engagement, the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) has free resources on its website, www.famlit.org. Among those resources is a series of podcasts and videos. These podcasts and videos were designed to help state departments of education develop student-centered parent-engagement plans with districts and schools. Student-centered efforts are research-based, data-driven and focused on the interests and needs of students, their families and communities.

The podcasts and videos feature strategies to meet students' individual learning needs.

Teachers and administrators from Kentucky, Virginia and other nearby states share time-tested ideas connected to student achievement. NCFL would love your feedback as you try the communication, relationship-building and information-sharing strategies.

More importantly, NCFL would like to hear about your successes with involving family members in improving student outcomes.

Letters About Literature 2014 Contest Rules and Guidelines

Letters About Literature (LAL) is a reading and writing contest for students in grades 4-12. Students are asked to read a book, poem or speech and write to that author (living or dead) about how the book affected them personally.

Letters are judged on state and national levels. Tens of thousands of students from across the country enter Letters About Literature each year. Students in grades 4-12 are eligible to enter the Letters About Literature reading and writing contest.

LAL awards prizes on both the state and national levels. Each participating state center has its own panel of judges who select the top essayists in the state. State winners will receive a cash award and advance to the national-level judging. A panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select one national winner per competition level to receive a $1,000 cash award.

The judges also will select one national honor per competition level to receive on each competition level to receive a $200 cash award.

Grades 9-12 entries must be postmarked by Dec. 10, 2013. Grades 4-8 must be postmarked by Jan. 10, 2014.

Read previous national-winning entries here. Read our state winners in the May 2013 *Literacy Link*. Click here for rules and guidelines.

Kentucky Reading Association Annual Conference

The Kentucky Reading Association is a professional organization aimed at promoting literacy for all with a mission to be a voice for literacy across the state. The 2013 Kentucky Reading Association (KRA) Conference is preparing for another outstanding event, themed "Literacy without Borders," in Lexington, Oct. 17-19, 2013.

You do not want to miss the opportunity to celebrate KRA's 50th year and hear from Don Leu, Brenda Overturf, Maureen McLaughlin, Betsy Baker, Suzy Kline and other national, state and local literacy experts at this year's conference. (Preview this year's speakers here.) Sessions are designed to focus our attention on the Kentucky Core Academic Standards, technology in education,

exceptional children and research-based instruction for pre-K through postsecondary literacy learners.

In addition, KRA will celebrate several special occasions at the 2013 conference, including the Kentucky Bluegrass Awards Luncheon with special guest author George Ella Lyon, the Author's Luncheon and a legislative forum. You can find out more and register at www.kyreading.org.

For more information, please see the conference flyer or click for information specific to middle/high school, special education or educational technology.

One of the goals of KRA is to provide pro-fessional development opportunities related to literacy to support teachers and students across the state. To better meet this goal, they are conducting a survey to assess the professional development needs of teachers. Please visit this link to take the survey.

They will use the information gleaned from this survey to inform the design of future professional development offerings provided by the organization. KRA thanks you in advance for assisting them in meeting their goals. If you have questions or comments about this survey, contact Angie Madden.

Want to be more involved? Click here to register for the book mob!

Kentucky Arts Council Seeks Schools to Participate in Poetry Out Loud

Applications are open for schools that want to participate in Poetry Out Loud, the national poetry recitation competition sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Poetry Foundation and the Kentucky Arts Council. Schools may apply online at the arts council website.

Last year, 18 Kentucky schools participated in Poetry Out Loud, which begins at the classroom level. Winners advance to schoolwide competition, then to the state competition and, ultimately, to the national finals. Last year, more than 300,000 students participated in the Poetry Out Loud program in 50 states, five U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

"Poetry Out Loud creates excitement in schools about the art of poetry and performance," said Lori Meadows, arts council executive director. "The program provides teachers with lesson plans tied to national standards, and students have the opportunity to work with a teaching artist to enhance the experience."

The winner of the Kentucky state finals, held in Frankfort in the spring, will receive $200 and an all-expenses-paid trip with an adult chaperone to Washington, D.C., to compete for the national championship. The state winner's school will receive a $500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. The first runner-up will receive $100, with $200 going to his or her school library. A total of $50,000 in awards and school stipends will be awarded at the national finals.

Participating classrooms receive a hands-on workshop with an arts council teaching artist, suggestions for memorization as well as interpretation of the poetic structure, free multimedia curriculum materials including a teacher's guide, poetry anthologies, audio guides and posters.

The deadline to apply is Oct. 15. For more information about Poetry Out Loud in Kentucky, contact Jean St. John at (502) 564-3757, ext. 486. For a general overview of the contest, click here.

The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, creates opportunities for Kentuckians to value, participate in and benefit from the arts. Kentucky Arts Council funding is provided by the Kentucky General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than $4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov.

PD 360 Resource: Student Collaboration and Engagement

PD 360 contains the largest online library of training videos for educators in the world. The 2,000-plus videos and online professional learning community of nearly 1 million verified educators make PD 360 the world's largest on-demand professional development resource for educators. All Kentucky educators have access to PD 360 and other resources from the School Improvement Network from the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) homepage.

Waukesha STEM Academy (part of the Council of Chief State School Officer's Innovation Lab Network) is taking a personalized approach to learning, beginning with their nontraditional definition of STEM – Strategies That Engage Minds.

At Waukesha STEM Academy, "connect time" is designated each day for students to collaborate with and seek guidance from teachers and peers. During connect time, students have a lot of choices as to what they can do:

- take extra time to work on a personal school project
- collaborate and work with peers on schoolwork
- receive help on an assignment
- receive tutoring on a specific topic or concept

Watch the video here. Learn more innovative strategies for student collaboration and engagement by viewing the video segments in the Student-Centered Learning program in PD 360.

Upcoming Literacy Events Around Kentucky

KCTE/LA Annual Conference
The Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/ Language Arts will host its annual conference Feb. 21-22, 2014. Entitled "Bridging the Literacy Gap," the 78th Anniversary Conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Lexington. For more information and to register, visit its website.

Writing Conference at Morehead
The conference will feature award-winning authors and professors, and it will offer strands for both writers and teachers of writing, including writing comics/graphic narratives, writing/publishing fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, writing to learn, strategies for teaching writing, and persuasive/ argumentative writing. Click here for more information and registration details.

October is Connected Educator Month
The U.S. Department of Education has declared October 2013 as Connected Educator Month (CEM), and Kentucky will be playing a key role in the event. Connected Educator Month uses online communities and networks to advance educational concerns, both during the month and beyond, as a kick-off to larger initiatives. A key goal of this year's CEM is to involve more states and districts in leading the event for educators as a whole.

You can see the developing event at http://www.connectededucatormonth.org and sign up to participate and get district-specific CEM updates here.

A Sample Instructional Plan for Student Choice

Jackie Rogers is a KDE literacy consultant. Rogers was a high school English teacher for 15 years and worked for fours years as a curriculum specialist in Pulaski County before joining KDE. In September's edition of the Literacy Link, *Rogers shared information on student choice. Here, she continues that article with a sample instructional plan for skills mastery and student choice.*

In the August edition of *Kentucky Literacy Link* I discussed a recent conversation I had with a former student that prompted me to consider my instructional practices while he was my student, particularly student choice. Even though all text and assignments can't be chosen by the student, it is important to consider the skills he or she will need when they make independent choices.

Below is a plan for instruction that I would consider to teach skills such as close read-

ing, drawing evidence from text to support an argument and choosing appropriate texts. The plan begins with a select few standards, that will no doubt be revisited either in whole or in part throughout the year, and uses formative assessment practices to determine student mastery of the standards. As students demonstrate understanding, the more autonomy they can be given.

When students demonstrate their ability to choose credible sources, find the best evidence for support and read for a purpose, then it is time to give them more opportunities to use these skills with text of their choice.

The Literacy Design Collaborative model is an organized way to create these meaningful literacy experiences that include reading, writing, speaking and listening. It is a structured process that can help guide students

in thinking about writing tasks and purpose as well as text choices – including student choice. You can find out more about LDC at www.literacydesigncollaborative.org.

Another resource that can assist in making text choices and considering the level of complexity, ensuring students are asked to read within their grade band and stretched beyond is www.ccsso.org/Navigating_Text_Complexity.html. Here you can find actual text sets with lines of inquiry that help drive and shape instruction.

With thoughtful planning and instructional design, we can offer students the chance to master skills and then give them the opportunity to grow into independent, lifelong learners.

This cross-content lesson asks students to consider the benefits and disadvantages of Walmart in our community.

Standards	Text	
W.9-10.1 • **Write arguments to support claims** • **Distinguish from opposing claims** • **Develop argument with evidence** • **Create solid links and relationships** • **Attend to tone and style**	*Walmart wants you believe its green makeover is changing the world. Just one hitch: China.* (Article, Lexile 1220)	Use as a model argument with well-established counterclaim and supporting evidence.
Considerations: Use strong and weak models. Responding to weak models could be used formatively to guide further instruction.		
RI.9-10.1 • **Cite strong, textual evidence** **RI.9-10.8** • **Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text**	Walmart Debate Video *Student Research*	Formal debate addresses counterclaims, but also uses strong textual evidence to support claim and rebut counterclaims.
Considerations: Here is an opportunity for students to do some research. They have been looking into the initial claim, but could research more counterclaims. Skills to address would be their ability to judiciously choose credible sources as well as tease out the author's argument. Speaking and listen skills could easily be included in this exercise.		
Anchor Standard CCRA.R.1 • **Read closely to determine explicit and inferential meaning** • **Cite textual evidence that support**	Choose a rich passage from the anchor text that is worthy of re-reading and examining. Use some excerpts from the student research.	
Considerations: Choosing an anchor text that is rich means it has layers of meaning, vocabulary and language properties that can be studied, and is complex enough to meet the expectations of that grade level.		

CIITS Help Tailored to Your Unique Role and Needs

The Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) is growing and improving every day. Many of you may have questions that range from the simple to the complex. This link can help with many of

those questions.

This page covers a range of CIITS topics that are tailored to the teacher, administrator or Professional Growth and Effectiveness System (PGES). At the

top of the page you'll see the tabs to indicate these. Under each tab, there are PDFs, videos and PowerPoints that lead the user through a process or explanation. These resources are very well organized according to

which CIITS module they are representing.

If you have further questions, contact Maritta Horne of the Office of Knowledge, Information and Data Services.

Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail mikkaka.overstreet @education.ky.gov to submit. Your submissions may be included in the *Literacy Link* to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past *Literacy Links* on KDE's website:
Click Here

If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

- Cindy Parker – Literacy Coordinator – cindy.parker@education.ky.gov
- Kelly Clark – Literacy Consultant – kelly.clark@education.ky.gov
- Jackie Rogers – Literacy Consultant – jackie.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Teresa Rogers – Literacy Consultant – teresa.rogers@education.ky.gov
- Pamela Wininger – Literacy Consultant – pamela.wininger@education.ky.gov
- MK Overstreet – Literacy Consultant – mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov
- Kathy Mansfield– Library Media/Textbooks Consultant – kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov

Feedback from the Field

Your feedback helps us to tailor the Link *to best meet the needs of teachers. Tell us how you're using it. Tell us what you want to see more or less of. We want to hear from you!* E-mail MK Overstreet.

"[The September issue was] my favorite issue yet! Great work!

- Amanda W.

"Congrats on the wedding and thank you for the inspirational piece this month!"

- Shelli B.

"I always look forward to your newsletter! Great job, as always!"

- Kathy M.

"Just read the first two *Literacy Link* issues and they were fabulous. (You and hubby looked so cute;) congrats again."

- Bianca L.

Additional Reading and Other Resources

- In three brief articles, Tim Shanahan responds to questions from teachers about the Common Core State Standards and text-dependent questions, close reading and thematic units: *Text Dependency is Too Low a Standard*; *To Multi-Text Or Not to Multi-Text in Close Reading*; *To Theme or Not to Theme, That is the Question*.
- The Cross-State Learning Collaborative is pleased to share new resources: Colorado's LDC Toolkit – The Colorado Legacy Foundation recently released the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) Toolkit, which contains the materials needed to provide professional development opportunities for LDC teacher trainers, LDC teachers and others interested in learning more about LDC; Louisiana Believes Video Library – The Louisiana Department of Education launched an instructional video library to assist teachers and other educational leaders in implementing the Common Core

in the classroom. Videos are available by grade level, subject area, relation to the Common Core and COMPASS rating; FREE Online Course on LDC – The New Teacher Center is offering courses for teachers looking to learn how to apply some of the tools from LDC when implementing the Common Core State Standards. The "Common Core in Action: Literacy Across Content Areas" course begins Oct. 7 and runs for six weeks.

- iTunes U Courses – CCSS for Teachers: Student Achievement Partners and The Council of Chief State School Officers are excited to announce the launch of a series of iTunes U courses designed to help educators develop a strong understanding of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the shifts they require to prepare all students for college and careers. A group of teachers, with the support of the Common Core authors, have de-

veloped these courses as a central and trustworthy place for teachers to learn about the shifts. The courses are optimized for the iPad or iPad mini but also can be viewed on a PC, Mac or iOS device.

- Professional Learning Modules KDE has developed two professional learning (PL) resources to support districts/schools in learning more about the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning and how they can support local PL teams. The first module, *Professional Development – Professional Learning: What's the Difference?,* is designed to guide facilitators through information and resources to use with their local teams. The second module is broken into six segments, each one illustrating an online resource that may be used to accomplish PL needs. While not a comprehensive list, the examples demonstrate strategies for working individually, in small groups or as a school.

EVERY CHILD
PROFICIENT & PREPARED FOR
S U C C E S S
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION